

Essential Gospel

Long Beach Alliance Church • February 21st, 2010 • Pastor Chris Laukford

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...

~1st Corinthians 15:3-4 (NASB)

1) True Security Is Found In The Gospel

- A) After correcting the disorderly worship meetings in Corinth (1st Corinthians 14:1-40), Paul turns his attention to issues of "disorderly belief" which also required correction.
- B) The Gospel (the message about Jesus Christ) saves when one hears, receives, is placed, and perseveres (15:1-2).
- C) Most notable is how the Bible handles the issue of "eternal security." Eternal security is NOT found in saying a certain prayer or going forward at a revival meeting. Rather, our security is in LIVING IN THE GOSPEL!
- D) Note that our hearing, receiving, being "stood," and even our perseverance are all actions of Jesus Christ through the Gospel. Our security is not in our actions, but in His!
- E) The one who doesn't "hold fast" (persevere), has believed in vain (without substance, 15:2). True security comes from LIVING IN THE GOSPEL (cf. Hebrews 3:12-14; 10:23-27)!

2) The Content Of The Gospel

- A) Reminding believers of the centrality of the Gospel message, Paul recounts Jesus Christ's "death for our sins," according to God's plan (1st Corinthians 15:3).
- B) Jesus died, was buried, and was resurrected on the third day, all according to plan (15:3-4). God's first step with any man is to provide the "content" of the Gospel, what the Bible teaches about Jesus Christ (Romans 10:17).
- C) Jesus' death on the cross for others & His resurrection, known as "Christ's substitutionary atonement," is the most important confessional statement of the content of the Gospel (Romans 5:6, 8, 8:32; 1st Corinthians 8:11; 2nd Corinthians 5:14-15; Ephesians 5:2; Titus 2:14; Galatians 1:4).

3) The Witnesses To The Gospel

- A) Providing a foundation for teaching on the resurrection (cf. 1st Corinthians 15:12), Paul recounts the chain of historically reliable witnesses to Christ's physical resurrection (15:6-8).
- B) Note that Christ "appears" to each of the witnesses in a strategic manner. People do not "see" Christ of their own volition, but Christ appears to those with whom He had post-resurrection business, including lowly Paul (15:8-9).

4) The Communication Of The Gospel

- A) Paul's low view of himself (15:9) laid the foundation for his understanding of God's grace (15:10). God was gracious with Paul, an enemy of God, and Paul understood God's grace in this fashion toward all people without distinction.
- B) Paul knew that Christ's post-resurrection appearance to him was authentic and showed God's extraordinary power to change people through the power of the Gospel!
- C) The authenticity of THE GOSPEL MESSAGE which hung on the reality of Christ's post-resurrection appearances, is the passion behind preaching, and does not prove worthless (15:10-11), but produces belief, salvation, and change!